

The Counties

(Continued)

Last week were unable to decide on proposals to approve a report on flood control and water conservation. Recently E. E. Campbell was instructed to investigate the County water problem. Last week his report recommended that the Board of Supervisors make further investigation. President H. H. Hale, Anaheim Union Water Company, thought further investigation into water conservation would cause waste of public funds. Therefore he would not recommend more action, suggested that present conservation measures, being the best that could be devised, should be adhered to.

Dam Debris Moved

After the last bit of rock had fallen and the dust from the landslide in San Gabriel Canyon had settled last week, builders and planners set to work to remove all the dirt, debris which had come from the west abutment wall of the dam site.

Many a person voiced many a doubt as to whether the dam building should go on, whether it should not be halted. Contractors and Los Angeles County officials haggled over who should pay for the excavation of the new land earth. There were 200,000 yards of it which had fallen from above, and Engineer E. C. Eaton estimated it would cost approximately \$590,000 to remove it. Luckily for the County, 100,000 yards of the slip were over the boundary of the "pay line." The County is responsible for any mishaps inside the pay line, but does not hold itself responsible for anything outside. The contractors must take care of this.

Reports on the geological formation of the base for the dam site are still forthcoming. At present one Professor C. F. Tolman, of Stanford University, is in charge of the explorations necessary to find out the distance to bedrock.

Meanwhile, apart from the price of cement itself, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution attempting to secure lower rates for the shipment of cement to the dam site. Their claims are based on the fact that since the County is using such a huge amount of cement for the dam (3,500,000 barrels), freight rates should be reduced for the County's benefit.

The Board has invited representatives of transportation companies to confer with it in this matter.

Beach City Third

Last week from Washington came a report, the substance of which brought the City of Long Beach into a national limelight. The report showed a list of cities of the United States and their per capita building outlay.

On the list, in third place, was the name of Long Beach with a per capita building outlay of \$106.08 for the first half of the year 1929. Konkordia ranked lower in the list with building expenditures of \$122.64; New York City ranked second with \$115.35. Under Long Beach, in fourth place, came Washington, D. C. Her per capita expenditure was lower than that of California cities, namely, \$69.38. Los Angeles was not mentioned on the list, there being no up-to-date census data to work by.

Geologists' Report

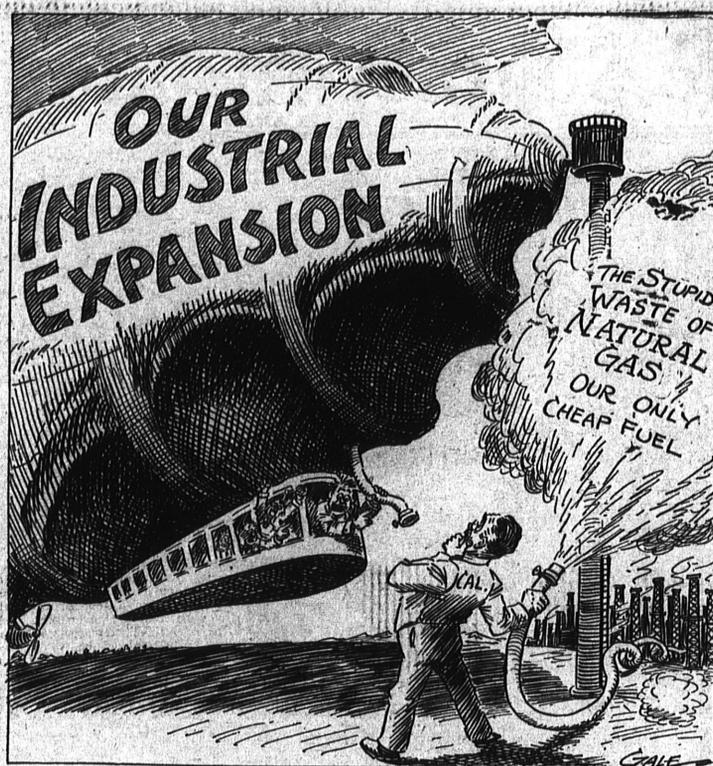
When approximately five acres of land at Point Fermin shook, slid oceanward a month ago, its property owners vacated the area, petitioned the Los Angeles City Council that it be "condemned" for park purposes, that it was unfit for habitation. (See News Review, Sept. 23-29.)

Los Angeles City Council heard the plea of the 59 property owners, asked U. C. A. Geology Professor William J. Miller to investigate the landslide, determine its magnitude, report whether or not the land was habitable.

Last week Geologist Miller, assisted by Geologists Ralph Arnold and Malcolm H. Bissell, presented his report to the City Council. It recommended that the entire territory be condemned as an area of human residence, that no one enter it.

No immediate danger is there that the area will increase its speed, hasten more rapidly oceanward. Said the report: "The movement is likely to continue, although the rate is somewhat lower than that of the past few years. It may be intermittent and slow, but a rapid, profound movement causing disastrous results is within the realm of possibility."

Slide characteristics: Gas sep-



"IT'S TIME WE GOT THE CONNECTION"

—Fred Gale, in the Los Angeles Times.

ages in the crevices along the beach, dislocated survey lines in the bedrock at the base of the cliff, indicated to the geologists that the slide is not a surface one, but deep-seated. Two surfaces seem to be sliding toward the ocean, one an upper shale (finely stratified rock formed by consolidation of mud, clay, or silt), the other a much deeper, heavier layer. Surface water entering the rocks is a prime factor in determining the speed of the land's movement. Not the first of its kind at Point Fermin is this landslide, Geologist Miller pointed out. He believed another, of similar proportions, had probably occurred hundreds of years ago at Portuguese Bend, several miles northwest. This, he said, was indicated by marks on the palisades.

Monrovia's Taxes

Although the Monrovia City Council reduced municipal expenses by combining several city offices, lessening the official overhead, Monrovia taxpayers will not find their assessments any lower this year. Reason: increase in county and school taxes.

Last week Monrovia Mayor (horticulturist) Arthur J. Little told Monrovia's Merchants Association of the difficulties encountered by the City Council in preparing its yearly budget. He said: "Although the city will be operated during the next twelve months on \$800,000 less its assessed valuation, the tax rate cannot be reduced because of county and school increases."

Mayor Little continued: "Unless relieved by public ballot, or some other means, the water situation will remain on the 'red.'" The Monrovia water rate is the third lowest in the San Gabriel Valley; one of the lowest in the State. But old bond retirement and interest cost mounts up so much that the water rate is inadequate; the deficit must come out of the general fund, affecting the tax rate.

Park Petitioners

Alhambra citizens do not believe that fine homes, well-paved tree-shaded streets, carefully-tended lawns, well-cared-for business streets are adequate to make a city attractive; there must also be city parks, open to the public for recreational pursuits, for leisurely evening strolls, for Sunday and holiday picnics.

Last week residents of the southern part of Alhambra circulated petitions to ask the City Commission to spend \$75,000, to establish a park in their section of the city. The Greater Valley Boulevard Improvement Association sponsored the circulation of petitions.

The petitioners suggested that the city use its share of the money

recently received from the sale of Alhambra's share in the tri-city farm for the establishment of the park. Last month another petition, signed by 2500 names, requested the City Commission to expend the money for a civic center, purchasing the Community Hotel property.

\$1,250,000 Site

Not many decades ago when First and Main Streets was the heart of Los Angeles, when the outlying blocks were exclusively residential, First and Hill Streets was little more than a suburb.

Now the State of California is offering \$1,250,000 for the property on the north side of First Street, between Hill and Broadway; to be used for the erection of a State building.

The Los Angeles Board of Supervisors purchased the plot of ground at First and Hill Streets for \$445,000, now renting for \$500 per month as an automobile parking station. Owners of the Klinker Building property at First and Broadway refused the State-proffered \$450,000; said their land was worth \$600,000 in ratio to the First and Hill land.

No more delay is the State willing to tolerate. The Board of Supervisors last week ordered County Council Mattoon to bring condemnation proceedings against the Klinker property, against another plot, immediately north of the Klinker building, now occupied by a garage.

Numbered Houses

When communities are first formed and houses are few, the postman has no trouble in knowing where people live, where to deliver the mail. When the city of Palmdale was first formed such were the exigent conditions. But now Palmdale has grown. Many are the houses within its borders. Now Palmdale asks that its houses be designated by numbers.

Therefore last week this little city on the edge of fruitful Antelope Valley drafted an appeal to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, through the local Chamber of Commerce; asked the board to co-operate with it in securing house numbers for its buildings and residences.

Raised Rates

Last week the Santa Maria City Council effected an increase in the city tax rate of ten cents per hundred, making the new rate \$1.20 per hundred. No higher is this than the rate of any other city in the State, similar in size to Santa Maria, stated City Manager Harry Neel, Jr. Said he: "Our rate is lower than most."

Fourth Largest

Only three cities in the United States have populations larger than that of Los Angeles, preliminary census estimates made by the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce revealed last week. The City of the Angels is now fourth largest; its three predecessors: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia.

Grieved were residents of St. Louis when their Chamber of Commerce announced the results of its survey. Cause: St. Louis had dropped from sixth to seventh place.

United States' first ten cities, in order of size: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, Baltimore, Boston, Pittsburgh.

Claremont Day

Three and one-half months of preparation and development culminated last week in a Claremont Day celebration, when more than seventeen stores in the foothill college community celebrated their formal openings. From 2:30 to 11 p.m., entertainment was in order; Ontario's American Legion Band gave two concerts, the Spanish serenaders sang, various exhibitions were given, an evening street dance was held.

Specially decorated were the streets of Claremont for the occasion. Pomona, Scripps and Claremont college students participated in the festivities; the San Gabriel Valley Firemen's Association held its September meeting, honored at dinner by the Claremont Fire Department.

Oil

Gas Solutions

Southern California oil interests faced with injunctions directed against them in the matter of natural gas wastage, sought solutions to their problems last week. Outstanding of the proposed plans was that of California's Oil and Gas Association. Its managing director, Edwin Higgins, sought to unite all the operators in the Ventura Avenue, Seal Beach, Signal Hill and Santa Fe Springs fields with a managing committee to represent them. At present only the Santa Fe Springs field has been faced with injunctions, but the other fields also expect similar action against them by the Director of Natural Resources.

Under Higgins' plan, the managing committee would cooperatively work out a system to prevent wastage of natural gas. Higgins would pool all outlets for natural gas,

each operator being allowed to dispose of his fair proportion through these outlets. Already, according to Higgins, the agreement has been signed by such companies as General Petroleum Corporation, Associated, Standard, Texas, Shell, Union and Richfield. These companies have agreed to contribute \$200,000 each to defray the cost of repressuring the wells.

Higgins last week was anxious to have as many operators as possible take part in the scheme. When the agreement has been executed by a sufficient number of the operators it will be presented to Oil and Gas Supervisor Bush for his approval. When so approved it will become effective. Proponents of the plan believe it will result in greater ultimate production and more stable markets for all operators in the fields in question.

However, while all the larger companies had agreed last week to Higgins' plan, smaller independent companies were not in accord, were drastically opposed.

State Oil and Gas Supervisor Bush last week also pondered over a plan presented him for closing off all high gas-producing wells in the Ventura Avenue field at Ventura. Submitted by President W. C. McDevity of the Pacific Western Petroleum Company, the plan would permit only the low gas-producing wells to operate. Even these would be shut down as soon as the 128,000,000 cubic feet of gas sold to Santa Barbara and Los Angeles had been used. McDevity's plan, while agreed to by some, drew vigorous opposition from C. E. Swigert, superintendent of production for Shell Oil Company, one of the largest producers in the field. He said the majority of the wells of the field, most of the old ones, were the large gas producers. Also closely restricted would be the Associated Oil Company, another of the largest organizations in the field. Associated's petroleum engineer, James Jensen, told Supervisor Bush he (Jensen) believed oil could be taken successfully from the field without the loss of an appreciable amount of gas.

Wildcats

Wildcating among Southern California oil companies, among any other oil companies, is a necessary, risky procedure. But to the oil industry, otherwise matter-of-fact, it adds glamor, a fascinating experience. James Jensen, told a stake a fortune on the roll of dice if a fluctuation of the stock market is no more enhancing than to invest great wealth in tall derricks, workers' wages, drilling for oil in unproved territory. Of such is wildcating.

Not so long ago oil men with vision and a gambling instinct went to the east side of Inglewood. In leases, oil-drilling machinery, wages, they spent thousands, all because there was a chance of striking oil far below the surface of the earth. Days went by and the oil men only spent money, received no returns. Weeks went by, months.

Then last week from the great drilled hole of the Blinn company well spouted forth black oil, 52-gravity petroleum. Excited men hurried to build storage tanks, overjoyed executives prepared to cash in. Owners of property in the vicinity were given the name of the man who would lease their lands, move off their homes, erect more derricks, "horn in" on the oil. The Inglewood City Council received fifteen applications for new drilling sites on the day Blinn Company's well came in. With the new discovery, veteran operators predict a scene of feverish drilling activities, a race for the high gravity oil.

Also wildcating but not yet successful was the venture in the Los Gatos Oil Company. At Arcadia for the past six weeks great drills have droned their tedious journey into the depths of the earth, toiling men have maintained ceaseless vigil, cemented the walls of a great circular hole 200 feet deep, 100 feet gas was found. Formations at the 700-foot level were said to be the same as those found at 3000 feet at Santa Fe Springs fields. Other less venturesome oil companies have representatives on the Arcadia spot, watching developments.

Oil production in all California for the week ending September 21 registered a new all-time high average, or an increase of 16,700 barrels over the daily average of the previous week. The largest producing field was Santa Fe Springs with 293,000 barrels daily, or 10,000 barrels more than the week before. Last week, however, the Santa Fe Springs daily output declined 23,300 barrels, placing the daily flow at 269,700 barrels. Santa Barbara was the second highest single producer for the week ending September 21, with 171,000 barrels.